

Message Text

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72

ACTION NEA-09

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R 231325Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6387

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 2413

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, XF

SUBJECT: PERES ARTICULATES UNDERLYING ISRAELI FEAR

1. SPEAKING TO ISRAELI TROOPS IN THE SINAI ON APRIL 23, DEFMIN PERES SAID THAT ISRAEL CAN ACHIEVE A PEACE TREATY WITH THE ARAB STATES IF IT WILL RETURN TO THE 1967 BORDERS, BUT THAT THIS WOULD NOT BE A GENUINE PEACE. EVEN AFTER A PEACE TREATY IS SIGNED, PERES REPORTEDLY EXPLAINED, THERE WILL BE FORCES IN THE ARAB WORLD THAT WILL NOT REST UNTIL THE JEWISH STATE SHRINKS TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR IT TO SURVIVE.

2. COMMENT: WHILE WE DO NOT SEE PERES' STATEMENT IN ITSELF AS MAJOR EVENT NOR AS DESIGNED FOR EXTERNAL CONSUMPTION, IT DOES SEEM TO US THAT HE HAS STATED A BASIC AND DEEP-SEATED CONCERN OF MANY ISRAELIS-- THE ESSENTIAL ASSYMETRY
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OF THE ARAB AND ISRAELI SITUATIONS--WHICH HAS DIRECT BEARING ON

ISRAELI ATTITUDE TOWARD CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS. MANY ISRAELIS CONCLUDE THAT EVEN SHOULD ISRAEL ACCEDE TO THE CURRENT ARAB DEMAND--RETURN TO 1967 BORDERS-- THE ARAB STATES EVEN THEN WOULD BE FUNDAMENTALLY INCAPABLE OF SATISFYING THE BASIC ISRAELI DESIRE--THE GUARANTEED PERMANENT EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL. THIS CONCLUSION DERIVES FROM AN UNDERLYING FEAR IN PARTICULAR OF TWO "FORCES IN THE ARAB WORLD": (1) PALESTINIAN IRREDENTISM, WHICH ISRAELIS FIND DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE WOULD BE SATISFIED BY RETURN TO 1967 BORDERS (OR EVEN BY ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE); AND (2) OPPOSITION ELEMENTS WITHIN ARAB STATES, WHICH MANY ISRAELIS FEAR WILL SEIZE POWER IN TIME AND ABROGATE ANY AGREEMENT REACHED WITH ISRAEL. (REINFORCEMENT OF ISRAELI CONVICTION THAT ARAB WORLD IS INHERENTLY UNSTABLE WAS ONE RESULT OF RECENT ASSASSINATION OF KING FEISAL.) WE BELIEVE THAT THESE FEARS, USUALLY ARTICULATE IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS ONLY BY RIGHT-WING OPPOSITION, ARE IN FACT WIDELY SHARED BY ISRAELIS OF VIRTUALLY ALL POLITICAL PERSUASIONS AND HELP EXPLAIN WHAT OFTEN APPEARS TO OUTSIDERS AS ISRAELI DETERMINATION TO SEEK UNREALISTICALLY AIRTIGHT AGREEMENTS.

VELIOTES

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